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RURAL AREAS  
DEVELOPMENT

# NEWSLETTER

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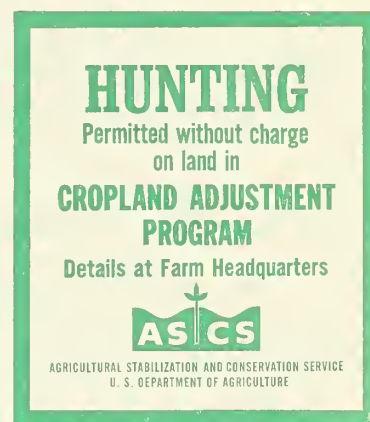
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## RECREATION ON FARMS OPENED TO PUBLIC THROUGH CAP

This little green and white sign will spell recreation to thousands of Americans looking for good places to hunt, fish, trap, or hike, thanks to a special feature of the Cropland Adjustment Program (CAP).

The land on which the new recreational opportunities are being found totals 1,069,709 acres concentrated mainly in the Midwest. It is part of the land that farmers have diverted under CAP from crops in plentiful supply to conservation.

Under the 2-year-old program, many farmers have signed agreements with the U.S. Department of Agriculture to open their land to the public for hunting, fishing, trapping, and hiking without charge, other than the nominal payment made to them by the USDA.



## WHAT MAKES BEND CLICK?

Nestled in a valley in Central Oregon, is a town that can truly be called a "Community of Tomorrow." Bend is a progressive, alert community with a big emphasis on livability. Its present population is about 13,000 with a predicted growth of about 20 percent per decade.

Some of the things that attract people to Bend and hold them:

\* Bend and the surrounding countryside have a prosperous and growing economy based on balanced use of the available natural resources. Irrigated valleys and wooded hills permit a wide variety of rural enterprises: farming (potatoes and mint), cattle and sheep raising, logging, sawmilling, manufacturing, outdoor recreation, tourism, hunting and fishing.

\* Its matchless water supply, four beautiful city parks, Central Oregon Community College and award-winning high school are attractions which promise that Bend can expect to grow beyond its present 13,000 population at the rate of 20 percent a decade.

\* Lumbering is the number one industry. One firm has announced plans to establish new particle board and plywood plants to join those already operating in the area.

\* Recreation is another valuable "industry" in the Bend area. In winter, more than 150,000 skiers try the slopes of Bachelor Butte in the Deschutes National Forest. The high snowfields are used for summer training for this Nation's Olympic ski teams.

\* The area has also attracted professional people who are pleased to practice their medical, legal and educational specialties close to such excellent fishing, hunting and winter sports grounds.

\* The community raised \$30,000 by popular subscription to join the National Science Foundation in financing a 24-inch reflector telescope on nearby Pine Mountain in 1967 to deepen its commitment to science and the space age.

#### FOUR REGIONAL TECHNICAL ACTION PANELS NAMED

USDA officials will be working closely with other public and private agencies in the Nation's Economic Development regions through Regional Technical Action Panels set up by Secretary of Agriculture Orville L. Freeman.

Regional panels were named in four Economic Development regions designated by the Secretary of Commerce under the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965. They are the New England, Ozarks (Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma and Arkansas), Coastal Plains (South Carolina, North Carolina, Georgia) and Four Corners (New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado, Utah) regions. A similar panel already is functioning in the Upper Great Lakes Development Region.

The Farmers Home Administration will provide the chairman of each of the regional panels. Chiefs of State offices for other agricultural agencies also will serve on the panels.

The governor of each concerned State and the Federal co-chairman of each Economic Development Region may designate representatives to serve on the Regional Panels.

These regional panels will work with multi-state citizens groups, and cooperate with, and provide information to, regional and State development commissions. Also, they will provide recommendations about application of USDA programs to regional problems, to Rural Areas Development Boards, and to the Federal co-chairmen of the Regional Commissions.

The Regional TAPs will meet quarterly and more often if warranted.



#### SECRETARY IMPLEMENTS ANOTHER POLICY STATEMENT PROVISION

Secretary Freeman recently implemented another policy recommendation of the Communities of Tomorrow policy statement.

One of the needs cited in the Communities of Tomorrow policy statement is: "To encourage Federal agencies to locate new installations in Communities of Tomorrow where feasible and, when awarding contracts, to give special consideration to developing rural areas."

Secretary Freeman acted on the first part of this recommendation by establishing within USDA a field location review board to make locational decisions for the Department of Agriculture. Its job -- to see that new USDA facilities, offices, and laboratories are located in areas of lower population density. The objective of this policy is to avoid adding further congestion in high density population centers while contributing to the economic development of less populated areas through economic spin-off from the new USDA facilities.

#### USDA JOINS IN FEDERAL EFFORT TO PROVIDE MANPOWER TRAINING

The U.S. Department of Agriculture recently became a full participant in the Cooperative Area Manpower Planning System (CAMPS), a national interagency effort (under the leadership of the U.S. Department of Labor and involving seven other departments and agencies) to coordinate all manpower and related programs currently being carried on.

Under this agreement a free exchange of information between the eight participating departments and agencies will result in a minimum duplication of resources. The USDA job will be to identify rural groups needing assistance. Technical Action Panels will do this. The manpower/training work of the Federal Government will be more closely linked with resources at State and local levels as a result of this coordinated approach.

The Federal manpower development training projects began in 1963 and to date total more than 12,300. Just slightly more than 8 percent of these programs have been oriented to or conducted in rural areas. The coordinated arrangement should enable USDA to get more such training into the rural areas where the needs are urgent. However, the program aims at improving training services in both urban and rural America and at raising living standards in locations throughout the Nation.

#### DRESSING UP THE ECONOMY WITH CATFISH

Fish-farming is rapidly increasing as a rural industry, bringing needed jobs and income to several southeastern States.

Fish-farming enterprises are operating in an estimated 92 counties throughout the South, producing more than 15 million pounds of fish a year for stores, restaurants, and other markets. This grosses fish farmers an estimated \$5 million to \$6 million a year. The production figure is expected to reach 40 million pounds annually within a few years.

In Mississippi, about 6,000 acres of farm ponds are producing catfish, including 2,420 acres diverted from other land uses since September 1966.

One catfish pilot processing plant that can dress 60,000 pounds of catfish a week is operating in the Southeast Delta Resource Conservation and Development Project in Mississippi, and pumping \$1.4 million a year into the local economy. And it's only an experiment.

Project sponsors figured that "crops" of catfish would be good use for farm ponds in the area, and a way to boost farm income. They set up the plant in a building at Morgan City to test techniques and figure out the best plant design. Thirteen women dress the fish bought live from local farms. The fish are trucked to Jackson for breeding, packaging and freezing and are sold to restaurants, food stores, and wholesalers.

Plans are underway for the larger plant; a Federal loan already has been approved for part of the \$900,000 construction cost. The plant will have three major units -- for live fish processing, fish meal, and feed meal.

Local landowners also are gearing up to provide the 3 million pounds of catfish the plant uses a year. Since the project began, 2,420 acres of catfish ponds have been put on land diverted from other uses.

Other RC&D project measures being worked on in the Delta area with USDA help include a \$7-million food processing plant, two airports, four watershed projects, town water systems, recreation and wildlife areas, and a speedup of soil and water conservation measures on the land. Together they are bringing a brighter outlook to the Southeast Delta area.